

AMENDMENT

(Amendment based on Article 11)

To : Examiner of the Patent Office

1. Identification of the International Application

PCT/JP03/06967

2. Applicant

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467-0035 JAPAN**4. Item to be Amended****Claims****5. Subject Matter of Amendment**

(1) The expression "wherein grooves are formed as set positions on one or either side of said panel, dividing it into a number of unit blocks" on page 8 in claim 1 should be amended as " wherein snapping grooves are formed at set positions on one or either side of said panel, dividing it into a plural number of unit blocks, and in a case where said grooves are formed on one side of said panel, the depth of said grooves is set to be in the range of between 10 and 70 % of the thickness of said panel, and in a case where said grooves are formed reciprocally at corresponding positions on either side of said panel, the sum of the depths of a pair of said grooves is set to be in the range of between 10 and 70 % of the thickness of said panel".

(2) On page 8 claim 2 should be deleted

(3) The expression " A masking member in accordance with claim 1 or 2, wherein the width of each groove is in the range of between 1 and 5mm" on

page 8 in claim 3 should be amended as “ A masking member in accordance with claim 1, wherein the width of each groove is in the range of between 1 and 5mm”.

- (4) The expression “A making member in accordance with claim 1 or 2, wherein an adhesive layer is formed on one side of said panel” on page 8 in claim 4 should be amended as “ A masking member in accordance with claim 1, wherein an adhesive layer is formed on one side of said panel”.
- (5) The expression “A masking member in accordance with claim 1 or 2, wherein inserting parts are formed on one side of said panel” on page 8 in claim 5 should be amended as “A masking member in accordance with claim 1, wherein inserting parts are formed on one side of said panel”.

7. List of Attached Documents

- (1) Replacement sheet of pages 8 of the claims.

REPLY

To: Examiner of the Patent Office

1. Identification of the International Application: PCT/JP03/06967

2. Applicant

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4. Date of Notification: 25. 05. 2004

5. Content of Reply:

Claim 1 is amended as follows

1. (amended) A masking member made of a foamed polystyrene having an expansion ratio is in the range of 5 between and 100 times, wherein snapping grooves are formed at set positions on one or either side of said panel, dividing it into a plural number of unit blocks, and in a case where said grooves are formed on one side of said panel, the depth of said grooves is set to be in the range of between 10 and 70 % of the thickness of said panel, and in a case where said grooves are formed reciprocally at corresponding positions on either side of said panel, the sum of the

depths of a pair of said grooves is set to be in the range of between 10 and 70 % of the thickness of said panel

In a masking member made of a foamed polystyrene panel divided into a plural number of unit blocks along snapping grooves, it is necessary that when one or more of said unit blocks is(are) snapped from said masking member along said snapping grooves, said snapping is very easy, and edges of said snapped masking member along snapping lines become straight, and the boundary [parting line] between the parts to be coated and not to be coated, being protected by said masking member, is substantially straight. On the other hand, it is necessary that said masking member having said snapping grooves must be strong enough not to break along said snapping grooves during the transportation, storage, or the like.

To satisfy said demands, the conditions in claim 1, namely (1) , that said masking member be made of a foamed polystyrene, (2) that the expansion ratio be set to be in the range of between 5 and 100 times, and (3) that the depth of said snapping groove(s) be set to be in the range of between 10 and 70 % of the thickness of the panel, are necessary. In a case where coating is carried out using said masking member, and said three conditions (1), (2) and (3), are satisfied, the boundary between a coated part the uncoated part becomes clear, and perfect looking can be ensured, and when a member such as washer, stand, or the like is attached to said uncoated part, no gap is produced between the area surrounding said member and the coating film.

Literature 1 (JP2-31862) discloses a masking member made of a foamed polystyrene sheet with an expansion ratio being in the range of between 2 and 50 times, but said masking member is not made of a foamed polystyrene panel; this Literature does not disclose the structure or formation of said snapping grooves on one or either side of said foamed polystyrene panel, and further does not disclose that the depth of said snapping groove be set to be in the range of between 10 and 70 %.

Accordingly, the present invention has novelty and an inventive step.

6. List of Attached Document

(1) Amendment

CLAIMS

1. A masking member consisting of a panel of a foamed polystyrene having an expansion ratio in the range of between 5 and 100 times, wherein grooves are formed at set positions on one or either side of said panel, dividing it into a plural number of unit blocks
2. A masking member in accordance with claim 1, wherein the depth of each groove, in a case where said grooves are formed on one side of said panel, or the sum of the depths of a pair of said grooves, in a case where said grooves are formed reciprocally at corresponding positions on either side of said panel, is in the range of between 10 and 70 % of the thickness of said panel.
3. A masking member in accordance with claim 1 or 2, wherein the width of each groove is in the range of between 1 and 5mm
4. A masking member in accordance with claim 1 or 2, wherein an adhesive layer is formed on one side of said panel
5. A masking member in accordance with claim 1 or 2, wherein inserting parts are formed on one side of said panel
6. A masking member in accordance with claim 5, wherein knobs are further formed on the opposite side of said panel
7. A masking member in accordance with claim 5 or 6, wherein a rib is formed around each inserting part of said panel

REPLACED BY
ART 34 AMDT